

**Memorial at Roads**  
**September 15, 2013**  
**Don Corry**

This is a time of Remembrance, Reflection and Refocus.

Victor Turner has done research in Africa where he discovered a tribe in which the women and children lived in one part of the compound and the men lived in another. When the boys get to a certain age, they are kidnapped by the men, taken into the jungle, roughed up a bit, huddled together and periodically mentored by an elder. Then after a season they enter into tribe as men and warriors, no longer returning to the women and children. Turner calls the bonding experience as liminality. Ray referred to our own experience as being exposed. Henri Nouwen calls it voluntary displacement. We choose to move out of our comfort zone, out of our Hobbit Hole and experience an adventure with others. It is humbling. We are exposed. But it creates a great bonding experience. We are a band of brothers. This is what happened to us 40 years ago. This is why we have come back.

This is known as homecoming weekend. Hard for us to imagine Roads as home. But for us, for a time, it was our home. Maybe didn't feel like it much. At times more like hell. Still we are all here for a reason. We built memories, made friends, became men.

I have been reading Game of Thrones, and in it the 11 year old character Arya Stark is trying to get home. Oh, she gets close, so close to be reunited with family. She can never quite get there to find what is left of her family. She is not alone; others in the story are trying to get home.

All of us have an eternal part of us that is craving to come home, to arrive where we were designed to be, to be connected with our Father in Heaven.

Today in a brief Memorial we remember fallen comrades. We trust that **Laurence O'Neill, Blane Ryan and Dave Serek** had found their way home. No more crying, no more pain. In God's presence, wrapped up in His Love. Eventually we will all have that opportunity to come home.

Silence: Remembering them

God wants all of us to come home, to find our identity and rest in Him.  
Jesus made many claims. He has "I am" statements:

- I am living water
- I am the bread of life
- I am the Word
- Before Abraham was, I am
- I am the way, the Truth, and the Life
- I am the resurrection and the Life

He is the way to come home. He is the one we cling to. He loves us deeply and will guide us safely home.

There is the story of a young minister, fresh out of seminary, who needed to visit a dying elderly parishioner. He was nervous and this very sick lady sensed this and said, "I am on this side of the river and soon I will cross over to the other side. But I am not afraid. My Father owns both sides of the river.

These encouraging words from the Apostle Paul were expressed at Laurence's funeral:

***Romans 8: 38*** *For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

I have found great comfort in the words of Jesus in Matthew, paraphrased in the Message

*"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me and get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me and watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.*

Many of us have discovered this secret of living freely and lightly. We are full of life and can model on how to love and live well.

Come to him. Cling to him. Walk with him. Keep company with him. Live free and light. Pray.